IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1-5 and 7-9 as follows:

1   1.(Currently Amended)   A method of automatic recognition of

2   company names in speech utterances, comprising the steps of:

3   storing entries including company names and variants of the

4   company names in a database, the variants including at least one of

5   mix-ups of part of company names, colloquial formulations of

6   company names, abbreviations of company names, and acronyms of

7   company names;

8   generating at least one word sequence hypothesis by a speech

9   recognizer ~~(10)~~ from a speech utterance consisting of one or more

10   words,

11   comparing the word sequence hypothesis with the entries which

12   represent company names stored in the database ~~(15)~~,

13   selecting a company name as a recognition result ~~(16)~~ in

14   dependence on the result of the comparison.

1   2.(Currently Amended)   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein

2   the speech recognizer ~~(10)~~ produces a probability value for each of

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3   the at least one word sequence hypothesis, which probability value

4   is taken into account for the comparison.

1   3.(Currently Amended)   A method as claimed in claim 1, further

2   comprising the step of using word sequence hypotheses produced by

3   the speech recognizer (10) are used for an adaptation of a speech

4   model (13) utilized by the speech recognizer (10).

1   4.(Currently Amended)   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein

2   certain words defined a priori are not taken into account when a

3   word sequence hypothesis is compared with entries of the database

4   (15).

1   5.(Currently Amended)   A method as claimed in claim 1, further

2   comprising the step of utilizing, by the speech recognizer (10), a

3   speech model (13) which was trained with the aid of the information

4   stored in the database (15).

    Claim 6 (Canceled)

1   7.(Currently Amended)   A dialogue system, comprising a

2   database storing entries including company names and variants of

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3   the company names, the variants including at least one of mix-ups

4   of part of company names, colloquial formulations of company names,

5   abbreviations of company names, and acronyms of company names, and

6   a processing unit ~~(5)~~ for automatically recognizing company names

7   in speech utterances, which ~~wherein~~ the processing unit comprises:

8   a speech recognizer ~~(10)~~, which is used for generating at

9   least one word sequence hypothesis from a speech utterance

10 consisting of one or more words,

11   a comparing unit ~~(14)~~, which is provided for making a

12 comparison of the at least one word sequence hypothesis with the

13 entries stored in the database ~~(15)~~ and for selecting a company

14 name as a recognition result ~~(16)~~ in dependence on the result of

15 the comparison.

1   8.(Currently Amended) A method of automatic recognition of

2   company names in speech utterances, comprising the steps of:

3   storing entries including company names and variants of the

4   company names in a database ~~(15)~~,

5   generating at least one word sequence hypothesis by a speech

6   recognizer ~~(10)~~ from a speech utterance consisting of one or more

7   words,

8   finding entries in the database that are at least partially

9   found in the word sequence hypothesis by comparing the word

10   sequence hypothesis with the entries which represent company names

11   stored in the database (15),

12   producing a first probability for each entry found during the

13   step of comparing, the probability being dependent on the number of

14   words in each of the entries found in the word sequence hypothesis,

15   wherein each word has a weight factor, particularly characteristic

16   words having a large weight factor, the weight factor being taken

17   into account in determining the probability for each entry, and

18   selecting a company name as a recognition result (16) in

19   dependence on the result of the comparison and probability of each

20   entry.

1   9.(Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein

2   the speech recognizer (10) produces a second probability value for

3   each of the at least one word sequence hypothesis, the first and

4   second probability values being taken into account for the step of

5   selecting.

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